CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

The use of gender is to reject notions about differences in sex and behavior, emotions, and intelligence. Feminism starts with them fighting for equality because the patriarchal system oppresses women. Society assumes gender has the same meaning as sex. Sex refers to the biological differences between women and men. So, when born, the baby has been given the label boy or girl and constructed to be feminine or masculine. Over time, biologically, men learn masculine roles and think and act masculine. Biologically, it also happens to women who have feminine roles. (Lindsey, Linda L. 2015).

Gender has been a social construct that has been shaped by a community's society and cultural heritage, and it has served as the framework for what has been determined to be suitable and inappropriate behavior for both men and women. As a result of this framework, women are subjected to more domestic labor conditions, whereas men are subjected to more public sphere. Gender refers to the social, cultural, and psychological characteristics that are associated with males and females in specific social circumstances. (Lindsey, Linda L. 2015).

This shows that gender is in fact, point out to the restriction, hindrance, and limitation towards the Feminine and Masculine behavior. Masculinity is the stereotyping of humans in accordance with their sex begins before birth.

MacInnes and Beynon (2002: 2) explain that masculinity formed from the men's fantasies of how they should behave, act and dress. This research will tap into a new layer of masculinity in female characters through Kress and van Leeuwen semiotic lenses. The masculinity traits that are found in many sources, such as films, comic, and webtoon. And become a source of reference for future research. It will also provide the necessary information for future research.

Based on the reasons above, this research examines one of the webtoons entitled "Wolfsbane" written by Ryan Cady, which has an issue about how the masculine qualities in a woman. This webtoon describes masculinity traits that the female characters develop within the story progression. The story of Quinn's (the main character of the story) entire life is dedicated to surviving and slaying werewolves. After her father's death, she needs to become someone strong, a heroine (webtoon 2019). Coming from a long line of werewolf hunters, Quinn's entire life revolves around learning how to kill and survive in the wild. Her father is cold and his training methods are harsh, but he gives Quinn all the tools and smarts she needs to stand a chance against the merciless werewolves that seek vengeance on her bloodline. Things take a turn when she fails to kill a rabid werewolf in time which results in the deaths of an innocent little girl's family. Her father prepared her for many things, but he never taught her how to raise a child in a world where danger lurks around every corner. To make matters worse, she's running low on the specially crafted silver bullets passed down from generation to generation (Likewise, 2022).

Today, there are a variety of ways for people to pass the time. The term "entertainment" does not only refer to comedy, variety, drama, and similar performers on television. Currently, there are many more options for entertainment; we can read a book, novel, manga, comic, and more to pass the time. One of the most read genres is now comic books. Comic books have grown in popularity as one of the most popular forms of reading. Comics not only supply us with engaging and exciting storylines, but they also provide us with eye-catching graphics that pamper the readers. There are several forms of comics, and each culture has its own, such as manga from Japan and Manhwa from Korea (Korean comic) (Petersen, 2011)

Webtoon has one thing in common; where they still hold onto their femininity when they become the "heroine", and how they become an alpha female figure the difference between a hero and heroine is the sex of the main characters. The heroine theme always has Alpha Female main characters; they have been characterized in terms of both masculinity and femininity (Sumra MK 2019). Masculine traits such as aggression, assertiveness, academic and professional achievement, confidence, being a supervisor or manager, and exhibiting a "type A" personality (Kindlon, 2007)

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There are seven previous studies that focusing on gender roles as masculine representation on female character. The first study, Christianna & Kurniawan (2015), in their article entitled *Masculinity Representation in Anime (Semiotic Analysis about the Representation of Masculinity in Tiger and Bunny Anime).* Claimed that the "Masculinity ego assume that all men are heterosexual. So when these assumptions collide with the reality, specifically minorities (androgyne, transgender and bisexual), they tend to oppose, even assault. Moreover, the act of assault also supported by religious norms as well as social norms, they regarded as a disgusting being."

As the third study that has been done about masculinity that connects masculinity and how the femininity is represented through fictional characters, Felicia (2019) analyzed chosen political cartoons from the websites of certain Nigerian publications. This was done in order to expose cartoonists' ideological (re)production of or opposition to equal gender power relations in Nigeria's socio-political area. The research revealed that Nigeria's newspaper satirical cartoons are conduits through which women in the nation are (mis)represented through established prejudices. This shows that the ideology of Nigerian Cartoonist stands more towards masculinity

Based on Felicia (2019) cartoon is one of the media to explore masculinity, there is also film, novel, and webtoon. A movie from France called *Masculin Féminin* is one of the few that explores the masculine side of females. It is even considered to be one of the movies that represent the 1960s at that time (Thomson, 2005). Besides movie, there are also novels that delve into masculinity

that appears on female characters, one of those novels is titled "Masculine Femininity" by Jack Halberstam. This novel, mainly talks about Halberstam, seeks ways to identify what constitutes masculinity in society the individual. The tomboy in this particular novel is another clear example of a young girl acting masculinely that Halberstam uses to highlight the difficulty that masculinity expressed in a female body is less dangerous in a young body and only becomes dangerous when those tendencies are still present as the child gets older (Halberstam, 1998). The media above are tools that can make anyone understand more about the problem of masculinity and femininity.

The fourth study is from Aybike and Hasan titled "*The Representation of Masculinity in Cinema and on Television: An Analysis of Fictional Male Characters*" Aybike and Hasan in their article about the representation of masculinity on male characters, and their actions towards female characters, two stereotypes emerged when viewers assessed the male characters in these productions. The first one is in every way romantic, attractive, wealthy, and powerful. The latter is amusing, straightforward, crude, and annoying. It seems as though the two characters' inner selves reflect them. Women are the second dramatic decrease, in accordance with the general perception of the receptions, both in Turkish TV series and Turkish films (Ayke and Hasan, 2017). The role of the woman in the narrative is to be with the male character, to be loved and protected by him. Male fights against life, overcomes difficulties and protects his woman. All gender roles are strictly distinct from one another. In all these constructions, men are described by their external appearance. Wealth is a very

important element. These productions create pressure on how men in the real world should be and also an expectation of how a woman's ideal man should be. (Ayke and Hasan, 2017).

"Visualization of Masculinity through Character Characterization in the Film '5 CM' Using the Theory of Roland Barthes as a Reference Theory" is the title of the fifth study by Aldira Dhiyas Pramudika that will be used as the previous study and that was later approved by the Indonesian Art Institute Surakarta. As research material, this study connects various scenes, shots, and sequences. The various elements of the scene are then examined in light of the personality traits and descriptive dimensions of the characters. Three pillars served as the foundation for the study: characterization, Barthes' semiotic theory, and John Bealdirynon's text on masculinity theory. In this study, it was discovered that masculinity can be depicted in characters and in the "5 cm film," masculinity is present through a variety of factors, including a person's education level, status and way of life, class and occupation, age, or even ethnicity. In addition, in the movie, the presence of another participant—a woman or a man—can determine whether a man can be considered to be masculine.

The sixth study for the previous studies was a journal written by Tri Handoko, a lecturer at Petra Christian University's Department of Visual Communication Design, and it was released in Nirmana Vol. 7 in 2005. Women's Masculinity in Advertising in Relation to Women's Social Image Viewed from a Gender Perspective is the title of the journal. In order to determine whether the female model has any effects on gender discourse in patriarchal culture, as well as

how much the social image of masculine women in advertising from a gender perspective, this research was conducted. The journal found the fact that many advertisements in the community used women as decorations and sweeteners in their advertisements. Women are also described as individuals who only exist to accompany men without a unique and essential role in it, including depicting women in the form of sexual fantasies. However, there are still some advertisements in which the role of women is described as masculine. They are held responsible for acting in a way that violates values and is deemed different from women.

In this seventh previous studies, Parvathi, a research scholar from Indian Institute of Technology, wrote an article titled "'Female Masculinity' in Dystopian Adolescent Fiction-Suzanne Collins' Hunger Games Series" that uses R.W. Connell's theory of masculinity in gender studies to analyze the idea of "female masculinity" through an examination of Suzanne Collins' Hunger Games series. In the Hunger Games series, female characters who embody masculinity gain power by "imitating" hegemonic masculine performances, according to this study. These characters are persuaded to see their femininity as something to be shed away, so this imitation cannot be seen as subversion. Their performances are merely parodies of hegemonic masculine performances that are only temporary, and when they end, they are returned to their inferior feminine roles. Given that it restores power to women, this paper rejects Halberstam's assertion that female masculinity is an original and subversive act and supports Judith Gardiner's claim that it is more of an imitation of hegemonic masculinity.

As a result, this study aims to demonstrate how patriarchal ideas about what being dominant and masculine means for men can also apply to women. It makes an effort to portray the development of masculinity in Quinn and Adrienne as female characters using gender as the conceptual framework, which aids in the analysis of the data.

1.2 Research Question

How do Wolfsbane webtoon portray the masculinity traits of Quinn, the main female character in the webtoon?

1.3 Purpose of the Study

To portray masculinity traits of Quinn as female main characters in Wolfsbane webtoon.

1.4 Scope of the Study

This research focuses on the masculinity traits depicted by Quinn's characteristic as female main characters that adopt masculinity traits which can be analyzed using Kress and Leuween semiotic theories.

1.5 Significances of the Study

This study will give contributions to readers who concern on webtoon. The result will give more significant information of the gender issues in patriarchal society. Additionally, for other researchers who wish to study the issue of women who can transform feminine traits into masculine.